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REMARKS

Claims 4, 8 and 9 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter Applicants claim as their invention. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the application as originally filed, for example, at page 6, lines 9-25; page 9, lines 15-23; page 10, lines 16-19; and page 11, lines 2-4. No new matter has been added.

Claim 9 stands withdrawn. Now pending in the application are claims 4 and 6-9.

Applicants submit that the amendments are properly entered pursuant to 37 CFR 1.116 as the amendments are believed to put all claims in condition for allowance. Therefore, entry and consideration of the amendments are proper and such action is requested.

The amendment and/or cancellation of claims is without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof and was done solely to expedite prosecution of the present application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original subject matter of this application in a later filed application claiming benefit of the instant application, including without prejudice to any determination of equivalents of the claimed subject matter.

Interview Summary

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of granting telephonic interviews with their undersigned representative on August 7 and August 9, 2006 (the "Interviews"). During the Interviews, the pending claims and outstanding rejections of record were discussed. While no final agreement was reached, the Examiner agreed to consider the allowability of amended claims, as presented herein.

Status of the Claims

Based on the Interviews, Applicants understand that the Amendment and Response filed on July 11, 2006 (the "July 11 Amendment"), has been entered. Therefore, the amendments presented herein are shown relative to the claims as pending after entry of the July 11

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Amendment.

Applicants also note that claim 9 was previously withdrawn from consideration. Although this point was not specifically discussed during the Interviews, Applicants now understand that claim 9 (as amended) will be rejoined and considered together with the remaining claims. As previously noted, in view of the allowability of claim 7, from which claim 9 depends, Applicants respectfully request rejoinder, consideration, and allowance of claim 9.

Claims Rejections — 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 4 and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Horstmann et al. in view of Leonard et al. and Loeper. This rejection is traversed.

While Applicants do not agree with the rejection of the claims as previously pending, the claims have been amended solely to expedite the prosecution and allowance of the application. Applicants consider that the rejection has been obviated.

For at least the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is proper and such action is requested.

CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants request reconsideration of the application. Early and favorable action is requested.

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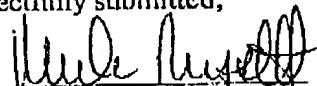
If the Examiner considers that obstacles to allowance remain, a telephone conversation with the undersigned is invited.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Deposit Account No. 04-1105, under Order No. 55732(71526).

Dated: August 9, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By



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